

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF WEST VIRGINIA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff,

v.

Crim. Action No.: 1:20CR31
(Judge Kleeh)

MARQUISE HICKS,

Defendant.

**ORDER ADOPTING MAGISTRATE JUDGE'S REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION
CONCERNING PLEA OF GUILTY IN FELONY CASE [DKT. NO. 17],
ACCEPTING GUILTY PLEA, AND SCHEDULING SENTENCING HEARING**

On November 18, 2020, the Defendant, Marquise Hicks ("Hicks"), appeared before United States Magistrate Judge Michael J. Aloi and moved for permission to enter a plea of **GUILTY** to Count One of the Indictment, charging him with Possession of a Firearm in Furtherance of a Drug Offense, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 924(c)(1)(a)(i). This Court referred Defendant's plea of guilty to the magistrate judge for the purpose of administering the allocution, pursuant to Federal Rule of Criminal Procedure 11, making a finding as to whether the plea was knowingly and voluntarily entered, and recommending to this Court whether the plea should be accepted. Hicks stated that he understood that the magistrate judge is not a United States District Judge, and Hicks consented to pleading before the magistrate judge.

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Based upon Defendant Hicks's statements during the plea hearing and the Government's proffer establishing that an independent factual basis for the plea existed, the magistrate judge found that Defendant Hicks was competent to enter a plea, that the plea was freely and voluntarily given, that he was aware of the nature of the charges against him and the consequences of his plea, and that a factual basis existed for the tendered plea. The magistrate judge issued a *Report and Recommendation Concerning Plea of Guilty in Felony Case* ("R&R") [Dkt. No. 17] finding a factual basis for the plea and recommending that this Court accept Defendant Hicks's plea of guilty to Count One of the Indictment.

The magistrate judge also directed the parties to file any written objections to the R&R within fourteen (14) days after service of the R&R. He further advised that failure to file objections would result in a waiver of the right to appeal from a judgment of this Court based on the R&R. Neither the Defendant nor the Government filed objections to the R&R.

Accordingly, this Court **ADOPTS** the magistrate judge's R&R [Dkt. No. 17], provisionally **ACCEPTS** Defendant Hicks's guilty plea, and **ADJUDGES** him **GUILTY** of the crime charged in Count One of the Indictment.

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Pursuant to Fed. R. Crim. P. 11(c) (3) and U.S.S.G. § 6B1.1(c), the Court **DEFERS** acceptance of the proposed plea agreement until it has received and reviewed the presentence investigation report prepared in this matter.

Pursuant to U.S.S.G. § 6A1 et seq., the Court **ORDERS** the following:

1. The Probation Officer shall undertake a presentence investigation of Hicks, and prepare a presentence investigation report for the Court;

2. The Government and Defendant Hicks shall each provide their narrative descriptions of the offense to the Probation Officer by **December 18, 2020**;

3. The presentence investigation report shall be disclosed to Defendant Hicks, counsel for Defendant, and the Government on or before **February 16, 2021**; however, the Probation Officer shall not disclose any sentencing recommendations made pursuant to Fed. R. Crim. P. 32(e) (3);

4. Counsel may file written objections to the presentence investigation report on or before **March 1, 2021**;

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5. The Office of Probation shall submit the presentence investigation report with addendum to the Court on or before **March 15, 2021**; and

6. Counsel may file any written sentencing memorandum or statements and motions for departure from the Sentencing Guidelines, including the factual basis for the same, on or before **March 15, 2021**.

The magistrate judge remanded Defendant to the custody of the U.S. Marshal Service **to be returned to the custody of the state of West Virginia.**

The Court will conduct the **Sentencing Hearing** for Defendant on **April 5, 2021**, at **12:30 P.M.**, at the **Clarksburg, West Virginia** point of holding court. If counsel anticipates having multiple witnesses or an otherwise lengthy sentencing hearing, please notify the Judge's chamber staff so that an adequate amount of time can be scheduled.

It is so **ORDERED**.

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The Clerk is directed to transmit copies of this Order to counsel of record and all appropriate agencies.

DATED: December 8, 2020.

/s/ Thomas S. Klee
THOMAS S. KLEE
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE